



THE WINCHENDON UNITARIAN

Established 1954; Published by the

Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon

Volume 57 Issue 3

November 2012

WORSHIP SERVICE 10 A.M.

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P. O. Box 218, Winchendon MA, 01475

**This is the Church of the Open Mind
This is the Church of the Helping Hands**

**This is the Church of the Loving Heart
This is the Church of the Caring Community**

Church Calendar of Events

- Friday, Nov. 2, 6:30 PM. Governing Board Meeting,**
John White's home. All church members are invited.
- Sunday, Nov. 4, 10 AM Morning Worship; coffee hour follows.**
- Monday, Nov. 5, 7 PM. AA meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 6, 12:30 to 2:30 PM Sewing Class
Tuesday, Nov. 6, 4:30 PM Brownies
- Sunday, Nov. 11, 8:30 AM Welcome Table Breakfast**
Sunday, Nov. 11, 10 AM Morning Worship; coffee hour follows.
- Monday, Nov. 12, 7 PM. AA meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 13, 12:30 to 2:30 PM Sewing Class
Tuesday, Nov. 13, 4:30 PM Brownies
- Sunday, Nov. 18, 10 AM Morning Worship; coffee hour follows.**
- Sunday, Nov. 18, 11:30 AM New Member get acquainted meeting.**
- Monday, Nov. 19, 7 PM. AA meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 20, 12:30 to 2:30 PM Sewing Class
Tuesday, Nov. 20, 4:30 PM Brownies
- Thursday, November 22, Thanksgiving Day**
- Friday, Nov. 23, Noon — 4 PM, 8th Annual Toy Drive for the Spirit of Christmas on front lawn**
- Sunday, Nov. 25, 10 AM Morning Worship; coffee hour follows.**
- Sunday, Nov. 25, 11:30 AM New Member get acquainted meeting.**
- Monday, Nov. 26, 7 PM. AA meeting
Tuesday, Nov. 27, 12:30 to 2:30 PM Sewing Class
Tuesday, Nov. 27, 4:30 PM Brownies
Tuesday, Nov. 27, December newsletter material due
Thursday, Nov. 29, 5:30 PM. Our Neighbors Kitchen
(low price meal – everyone invited)

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE GOVERNING BOARD

Hello Friends,

Our congregation has found itself at a place where we have been before, without a minister. At first this might appear to be something of concern. Rev. Marguerite was with us for a number of years. She worked with us as a congregation through some tough times. During her stay she helped us heal some old wounds left by struggles long gone. We also gained new tools to prevent some of the interpersonal issues that caused so many problems. The Behavioral Covenant is an example of one of these tools. The Covenant gives us a framework for keeping the lines of communications open and to repair communication when things appear to have fallen apart. It has served us well during the last several years. It is also a living document and will be adjusted as needed to fit our changing times. We thank Rev. Marguerite for this and the other gifts she gave us during her time with us. Our divergent paths take with each of us those experiences we shared — congregation and minister — to use as building blocks for our respective futures.

On October 21ST I was able to attend a Small Congregations Workshop down in Monson, MA. It was an enlightening experience and not just for what was discussed. Driving down through the back roads of Hubbardston, Barre, Hardwick, Ware, and Palmer was a little dangerous in the dense fog that early Saturday morning. I was fully expecting to come

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around a corner to find a deer in the road. Passing through Palmer the fog began to lift. I'm glad it did. The lifted fog began to breakup with spots of sun shining through the clouds. The first thing I noticed entering downtown Monson was the sun glimmering off of a blue tarp on my left. The tarp was covering a boarded up school. I had entered the area where the tornado of June 1ST 2011 had passed. I'd heard about it; I'd read about it. It never occurred to me that the scars would still be as evident as they were. Continuing down the road I came upon the Unitarian Universalist Parish of Monson. Like us they have a beautiful stone church. Unlike us their steeple toppled into the street during the storm 17 months ago. Their steeple is now wrapped in scaffolding, as it will remain for the next several months. Officially they are the same size as our congregation. They demonstrated courage to continue on in the face of change. It would have probably been easier to not rebuild. With limited resources it would have been easier to re-prioritize what was important to them. The building is, after all, just a building; but they chose to rebuild. They had the courage to see themselves not only as trustees of the history of their congregation but the stewards of the congregation in the future.

The Small Congregation Workshop was interesting. It gathered 14 different congregations together in one spot to share ideas about things that worked and things that didn't in group dynamics and programming. Time and again little things we take for granted came up. Children's presence during the worship was discussed. I was surprised to hear that not every congregation does a children's story or as we know it a "Story of All Ages." Uses of Behavioral Covenants were discussed to resolve problems within Governing Boards and Congregations. Time and again I heard congregations speak of their challenges. Attendance, money, and service to their communities challenged each congregation and helped them define themselves: From the problems arise the benefits of being small. Our resources are restricted so we use more creative solutions to problems. Our congregations are smaller so consensus is easier to find. Our energy levels are higher because we act

and interact more like a family than an institution. It was a long drive home full of ideas and hope.

Later in the week was Our Neighbors Kitchen. When I began helping at the dinner four years ago many of the volunteers were retired people looking for a way to give back to the community. Health problems and age have taken those volunteers from us one-by-one. The latest one is Bob Mable who is home resting because doctors can't do any more for him. Our hearts and prayers go out to him as he prepares for the next stage in his life. The meal was simple tender pork chops, butternut squash, broccoli, and salad. Not unusual fare for our dinner. Attendance was good: above 70 people. What really stood out was who was there helping. Most of the regular volunteers couldn't make it this month. Yet when it came time for serving we had more servers than we needed. Cleanup came and dishes flew-by as new volunteers pitched in. Many of which we are expecting to see again. The kitchen was full of people, all helping. All of them understanding why we were there; we were there to help provide sustenance to the bellies and spirit of the community and have a little fun at the same time.

We continue to be blessed as a congregation. Under Rev. Marguerite's care we've grown into a more accepting and stronger community than we were before. We are confident that we have the tools we need to meet challenges as we discern our new path forward. The Governing Board is using those tools to find the best options available to us for ministry, professional or otherwise. This is not an easy or quick process, there will be challenges. We can take courage in knowing that other small congregations have overcome incredible odds to keep going. Congregations like Monson where their building is partially destroyed, still they rebuild for their community. Once our Governing Board has arrived at the best two options they will be presented to the congregation for discussion and vote. Every voice in our congregation is important to this process. It's important to keep in mind our needs and our responsibility of stewardship for those who will come after us. The congregation stretches into the future just as it reaches back to the 1860's. There will always be

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new people looking for the spiritual community our congregation provides in Winchendon. Some people will find fulfillment in helping through service like at Our Neighbor's Kitchen; others will come to experience worship. All are part of the tapestry, the puzzle, which is the Unitarian Universalist Church of Winchendon. Together we will continue to find path forward. Together we are strong enough to overcome any challenges that lay ahead.

Thank you and peace,
Dave

RE NEWS

A huge THANK YOU to all who helped with our recent Open House & Mitten Drive! We collected over 25 pairs of gloves and mittens, many of which were hand-knitted, along with several hats and scarves. The Bake Sale tables were full of delicious goodies thanks to our volunteer bakers. It was a success, netting the RE Program \$127 for supplies. Many hands make light work...and are much appreciated!

Hopefully, you and your children have had some conversations around Rev Marguerite's leaving and have been able to work through any concerns or questions that came up. We have talked about it in RE and have listened to one another's thoughts on it. Anytime there is a "goodbye", it can be similar to the grieving process. Sometimes all seems fine, and then one may be frustrated or angry, or perhaps cry for what seems like no reason. It is all part of the process and can oscillate between emotions and reactions to those emotions. Please speak

CARING CONNECTIONS

UUCW is a caring congregation. We reach out to each other to offer caring and we remember each others' joys and concerns. Please let a member of the Governing Board know if you would like to visit other members and friends, deliver flowers or an occasional meal, act as a greeter on Sunday services, offer a ride to church or any number of "caring connections" or if you are in need of a "caring connection" yourself at this time.

Contact Information

Minister: In transition

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BIRTHDAYS IN NOVEMBER

Tim Elkins	November 3
Marguerite Sheehan	November 6
Brennan Mahoney	November 7
Phyllis Priest	November 21
Mardis Priest	November 27
Elaine Gaspard	November 27

with Tracy or Wendy if you are concerned with how your child is doing, if questions arise, or you'd like to share how s/he is coping with the loss.

Our 8th Annual Toy Drive for the Spirit of Christmas is coming! Join us between 12 – 4pm on Friday, November 23, as "elves" collect donations of unwrapped new and gently used toys from the community. People simply pull into our driveway and young helpers meet them at their cars to receive the contributions. With a smile and a "thank you", the elves hand out candy canes and invitations to our Christmas Eve Service. The Spirit of Christmas was started several years ago by Winchendonian Lori Robinson to help area families throughout the year with clothes, toys, home goods, etc. This toy drive is her kick-off for the Christmas season. Stop in for some hot chocolate, help decorate the tree, share some pizza, and see our "elves" in action!

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RE-CHALICE CHILDREN

Adult Religious Education... Diwali (dih-WAH-lee or dih-VAH-lee) is a popular festival from South Asia. It is known as the 'festival of lights' because buildings are decorated with small clay oil lamps called diyas that are placed in rows in windows, doors and outside buildings. In India, these lamps are often floated across the river Ganges – it is a good omen if it gets all the way across. Diwali is a religious occasion for Hindus, Jains, and Sikhs which lasts five days, beginning November 13 this year. The festival means different things to different groups, but it basically celebrates the victory of good over evil, light over darkness, and knowledge over ignorance. It is also a time to celebrate the year's harvest, redecorate homes, and buy new clothes. The exchange of gifts is common and traditionally sweets and dried fruit are given. In more recent times however, people are buying gifts and some worry that it is becoming too commercial (sound like Christmas in America?).

Holy History... November 10, 1801 – Samuel Gridley Howe was born in Boston, MA. He founded the New England Asylum for the Blind in 1832, later renamed the Perkins Institution. He wrote textbooks for teaching the blind, and the principles he wrote for the state became a national model. He also worked for prison reform. You may remember on Mother's Day a couple of years ago, our service was based on his wife, Julia Ward Howe. She wrote the "Battle Hymn of the Republic", promoted peace, women's rights, and reforms for prison and education, and she founded Mother's Day as a day of peace. The Howe's were Unitarians.

November 18, 2003 – The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court issued its decision in the case of Goodridge vs. the Department of Public Health of Massachusetts. The court determined that under the Constitution of Massachusetts, it is illegal to deny to people of the same gender the same marriage rights granted to people of different genders. Of the 14 plaintiffs involved, seven were Unitarian Universalists, including Hillary Goodridge.

Tracy Gambill, DRE

Our year has started off very well! We have adopted a class tree (the evergreen tree just outside the Equal Access Entrance) and will watch it throughout the year as it grows and changes. We made bark rubbing and leaf prints with paint (and only got a little on ourselves!). We also had great fun planting bulbs in the front garden with Jay and taking a tour of the various gardens on the church grounds. This helps to remind the children that we are caretakers of our earth, our seventh principle.

In November, we will concentrate on how the children are the same, yet a little different from others in the group. I hope that this will create an environment of good self esteem as well as an appreciation of others. I am also looking forward to celebrating Thanksgiving with the children with a class focusing on Native Americans. It is important to be respectful of everyone's traditions!

Stop by and see some of our wonderful artwork in the Pine Room!

Best wishes,
Wendy O'Brien

NEW MEMBERS

We have some prospective new members. In order that new members may become better acquainted with our congregation, it has been decided to ask them to attend a group meeting. Two meetings will be offered, one on November 18 and one on November 25, both after the morning service. Prospects may pick one or the other. Present members are also invited to participate to help better acquaint the new members with our congregation.

A formal new member reception ceremony is planned as part of our regular service on December 9.

Change Your Address?

If you do change your address, either U. S. Mail or email, please let us know. Email whites573@verizon.net or send a written note to the church at P. O. Box 218, Winchendon, MA 01475. Thank you.

Sewing Classes

The Governing Board has authorized this commercial activity at the church on a trial basis because it feels there is a need for such a class. We know of no other such opportunities for people to sew that can allow people to save money or live better.

Do you want to learn to sew?

Want to renew your interest in sewing?

Looking for a creative new hobby?

Experienced seamstress looking to share the joys of sewing with adults in Winchendon!

- 6 week class-Tuesdays from 12:30-2:30
- Easily located at The Unitarian Universalist Church in Winchendon
- Next class starts 11/2/12
- Use your machine or mine!
- Class size limited to number of machines available:. Sign up NOW!
- Learn to make clothes, gifts, or items for your home!
- Also considering an after school class for kids ages 7 and up - please contact if interested!

°To enroll or for more information including tuition rates, please contact Marcia at garcia-marcia@gmail.com or call 978-855-5917.

Governing Board Highlights September and October

Sue Faucher has assumed the chairmanship of the Religious Education Committee.

We plan to hold one *Chalice Circle* service each month. These services feature an organized discussion of a particular topic rather than a sermon. The services from the Church of the Larger Fellowship will continue once a month. At these services one of our members leads a pre prepared service rather than having to write one. Dave Faucher is arranging for

guest ministers for some of the services through December. Planning is still under way for 2013.

Tracy Gambill has given notice that she will leave her position as Director of Religious Education at the end of the church year in June. She is the longest serving DRE we have had.

Lucinda Ellert has been engaged as musician for the year. We use that term because Lucinda has many talents. In addition to playing the piano, she also plays and teaches other instruments and is leading a children's choir. An adult choir is possible if there is enough interest. She says she needs much more practice before she takes on our organ in public.

The Board met with Doug Zelinski from the Clara Barton District who provided information to help the church in a search for a part time minister. (No way can we afford full time.) The Board intends to present various ministerial options to the congregation and seek their guidance. What we do about ministry is a most important decision that should be made by the whole congregation.

In addition to asking Robinson-Broadhurst for renewed assistance with our budget and ministerial expenses, we will ask them to fund a commercial dishwasher for the kitchen and renovations to the heating system.

There is a proposal for a Meditation Group to meet at the church. More discussion on this will be needed.

The Board authorized a sewing class at the church for a six week trial basis and a very low rent. If it works out, it may be continued with a more realistic rent. See left column.

